

OLD FIREFIGHTING TRAINING AREA Fact Sheet Update (September 2005)

INTRODUCTION

At this site (IRP Site 09), the Navy has conducted a Phase 1 Remedial Investigation, a source removal investigation, a human health risk assessment, a marine ecological risk assessment, and is currently completing the Remedial Investigation. This site is currently referred to as Katy Field.

BACKGROUND

The 5.5 acre site adjacent to Narragansett Bay was used to train Navy personnel in fighting ship-board fires. Several buildings were present to simulate ship compartments, and these with several burning pits and paved areas served as the principal areas of activity. By 1972, most of the buildings were demolished.

Two soil and debris mounds were the primary features until 2004. Based on previous investigations it has been estimated that demolition debris from the former training buildings and pavement are within these mounds.

The site was used for recreation from 1974 until 1998. A child day care center was also in operation at the site until 1994.

PREVIOUS STUDIES

An Initial Assessment Study (IAS) was conducted in 1983 that concluded that since the area had been excavated extensively, and no environmental problem had been reported, the site did not pose any threat. However, in 1987, oil was found in the subsurface soil during work to expand the child day-care center.

In 1992, the Navy initiated a Remedial Investigation (RI) that included this area. The Phase 1 RI reported in 1994 that VOCs, pesticides and fuel components were present in soils and groundwater. It was determined the contaminant concentrations did not pose an immediate threat to humans.

In the fall of 1996 the Navy reviewed the findings of the Phase 1 RI. A study was initiated to define possible continuing sources of oil contamination on the site. However none were found, and it was determined that the oil was likely immobile and degrading.



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In 1998 the EPA requested that Katy Field and the recreational area around it be closed due to elevated concentrations of metals that were reported in the 1994 RI report. The Navy immediately performed a human health risk assessment at Katy Field which concluded that risks to site users were negligible. However, studies did report that lead was present in surface soils at a concentration in excess of the residential criteria RIDEM published in 1996.

Also in 1998, an ecological risk assessment was conducted in the harbor adjacent to the site. This study found some potential for risk to ecological receptors in the near shore areas from contaminants related to old fuel releases.

A Feasibility Study was completed in 2002 to evaluate remedial action alternatives to restore the site for unlimited use. Based on that study, the Navy announced intentions in July 2003 to conduct a soil removal action to remove the contaminants from the on-shore portion of the site.

Also in July 2003, fact sheet was published and an informational open house was hosted by the Navy to present plans for soil removal actions. The soil removal action commenced in 2004, and is anticipated to be continued through 2006.

RECENT ACTIVITIES

The Navy began soil and debris removal at the site in October 2004. Removal of the soil and debris mounds was completed in May 2005.

NEXT STEPS

The Navy is reviewing the appropriateness of removing the remaining soils under the mounds at the site through a peer review of the site records. After the review is completed, the Navy will develop a remedy to address soil, groundwater and sediment all at the same time.

The Navy will keep the public informed of progress through the Restoration Advisory Board and other outreach programs.